

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BOMBAY 00808 090435Z

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ACTION FBO-01

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R 081200Z APR 74

FM AMCONSUL BOMBAY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4369

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: ABLD, IN

SUBJECT: REPLACEMENT OF GOVERNMENT-OWNED PROPERTIES

REF: A) STATE 067432, B) NEW DELHI 4562

1. WE MUST CONFESS THAT WE ARE SOMEWHAT LOST ON THIS ONE SINCE WE HAD BEEN PROCEEDING UNDER THE IMPRESSION THESE PAST MONTHS THAT NEW CONSTRUCTION MIGHT BE A POSSIBILITY WITHIN THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS. IT MAY STILL BE BUT REFTELS SUGGEST THAT THE TIME FRAME WILL LIKELY BE A CONSIDERABLY LONGER ONE. BE THAT AS IT MAY WE WOULD LIKE TO ENDORSE MOST STRONGLY EMBASSY'S RECOMMENDATION REFTEL THAT WE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TRANSITION ACCOUNT RUPEES IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT FEASIBILITY STUDIES OF OUR TWO GOVERNMENT-OWNED PROPERTIES (WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN HOUSE) AS EARLIER DISCUSSED WITH DR MOORE AND SPICER. IT IS TRUE THAT WE MAY WISH IN FUTURE YEARS TO MODIFY IN SOME WAY ANY ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN THAT WE DRAW UP NOW. HOWEVER, WE FEEL STRONGLY WE SHOULD GO AHEAD NOW IN ORDER TO

DETERMINE WHETHER IT IS FEASIBLE TO DEVELOP THESE PROPERTIES AS WE IN CONGEN HAVE PROPOSED AND HOW BEST WE CAN DO SO IN THAT EVENTUALITY. SUCH STUDIES WILL GIVE US SOME MEANINGFUL BASIS FOR FUTURE PLANNING ON THIS SUBJECT. THIS WILL ALSO HELP KEEP UP MOMENTUM AND FOCUS THIS ISSUE. AND AS EMBASSY POINTS OUT MONIES INVOLVED WILL BE LOST TO US IF WE DON'T USE THEM SO THAT WE HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE.

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2. IF THERE ARE SUFFICIENT MONIES REMAINING IN THE TRANSITION

ACCOUNT WE MIGHT ALSO WISH TO EXPLORE PROPOSAL MADE BY INSPECTORS WHILE BOMBAY. LATTER SUGGESTED HIRING OF A PROFESSIONAL PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT FIRM TO SURVEY ALTERNATIVES TO BUILDING ON PRESENT LINCOLN AND WASHINGTON HOUSE SITES. IN OUR VIEW THIS IS NOT A CONTRADICTORY BUT A COMPLEMENTARY SUGGESTION. THIS HAS MERIT SINCE IT COULD QUIET CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS ON THIS SCORE

AND IT NOW APPEARS THAT WE HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO EXPLORE THIS ONE AS WELL. THIS POST IS NOT IN A POSITION TO DO THIS KIND OF DETAILED STUDY. SUCH RESEARCH AS WE HAVE DONE HOWEVER HAS LED US TO THE CONCLUSION THAT WE CAN BEST MEET OUR FUTURE OFFICE AND HOUSING NEEDS IN BOMBAY BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR PRESENT TWO GOVERNMENT-OWNED SITES. WE ARE NOT SAYING THIS IS THE IDEAL SOLUTION BUT WE THINK IT IS THE MOST PRACTICABLE AND DESIRABLE AVENUE AVAILABLE TO US. IF A PROFESSIONAL SURVEY TURNS UP SOMETHING BETTER AND ON TERMS WE CAN LEGITIMATELY SUBSCRIBE TO, WE WILL BE FIRST TO ENDORSE IT. IN SUM, LET US USE WHATEVER SURPLUS RUPEES THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO US IN BOMBAY TO AT LEAST PROVIDE A MEANINGFUL PLANNING BASE TO OUR SUCCESSORS.

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